



  
**VetSet2Go**  
Building veterinary employability

# Veterinary Client Survey



## The **Veterinary Client Survey**

investigated the experiences of veterinary clients in order to better understand the key skills that veterinary graduates need to deliver great service.

The survey ran for **28 days**, from Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November until Friday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016, and achieved **1,507 respondents worldwide**.

The survey asked clients to consider what is most important to them when they interact with a vet.

Firstly, they were asked to rate specific aspects of **six veterinary skill areas**:

- Client relationship
- Professionalism
- Communication skills
- Decision making and problem solving
- Commitment to animal welfare
- Commitment to quality and the profession

Secondly, they were asked to rank the six veterinary skill areas in terms of most importance to them.

The results from this survey have contributed towards the development of VetSet2Go's **Veterinary Employability Framework, Resource Cards**, and an online **Assessment of Veterinary Employability**, to inform the teaching and assessment of veterinary students, and to help prepare them for the realities (and joys!) of the veterinary profession.



THE WORK PSYCHOLOGY GROUP'S ANALYSIS OF THE VETERINARY CLIENT SURVEY





**Work Psychology Group**  
Thinking differently

# **The Definitions of Client Satisfaction: Development of a Veterinary Graduate Employability Framework**

Summary Report of Stages 2, 3 and 4

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# Executive Summary

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## Overview

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of Work Psychology Group's (WPG's) contribution to the development of an employability framework that seeks to define the capabilities required for veterinary graduates. This is part of a wider research agenda entitled 'VetSetGo' that seeks to build a collaborative outcomes and assessment framework building employability, resilience and veterinary graduate success.
- 1.2. This project consisted of four stages, of which WPG contributed to Stage 2 (template analysis), 3 and 4:
  - *Stage 1 – Scoping, planning and literature review.*
  - *Stage 2 – Qualitative phase.*
  - *Stage 3 – Survey creation and validation.*
  - *Stage 4 – Final survey distribution and analysis.*
- 1.3. This report provides a summary of the steps taken in analysing the data obtained from the interviews and focus groups, and the outcomes from the validation survey. This report is intended to contribute to the broader reporting of the project and in the context of the wider research agenda, rather than as a standalone report.

## Development of the Capabilities Framework

- 1.4. The data from 14 transcripts (a combination of interviews and focus groups) were analysed using template analysis, to produce a capability framework. The framework underwent a series of validation stages by the research team using established capability framework development techniques. An initial period of client consultation was also undertaken in order to shape the framework and indicators.
- 1.5. The capability framework was cross-referenced with the ASME systematic review, to ensure that all relevant behaviours had been captured within the framework.
- 1.6. A survey was undertaken with veterinary clients in order to validate the content of the framework. The purpose of the survey was to ensure that the content represented behaviours that clients consider important in their vet and thus could be deemed as 'definitions of client satisfaction'.

## Results and Conclusions

- 1.7. The capability framework comprises six capability areas, with between four and ten behavioural indicators defined for each capability. The six capability areas are: Client Relationships, Professionalism, Communication Skills, Decision Making and Problem Solving, Commitment to Animal Welfare, Quality Management and Organisation. The framework represents capabilities from a client perspective, and therefore will not cover the breadth of requirements of a successful vet, rather what is important and observable to a client.
- 1.8. A validation survey, completed by approximately 1580 clients who consented to their data being used, found all six capabilities, and all behavioural indicators, were considered to be on average at least 'very important'. Therefore, providing support for the inclusion of all capabilities and behavioural indicators within the framework.
- 1.9. Whilst some differences regarding the extent of perceived importance were observed when comparing ownership groups, overall, all capabilities were still rated on average as at least 'very important', which suggests that the framework is representative across ownership groups.
- 1.10. When the data were split by country of residence, the results were fairly consistent, suggesting that the capabilities framework is suitable for use across countries.

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# 1. Overview

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- 1.1. This report provides an overview of Work Psychology Group's (WPG) contribution to the development of an employability framework that seeks to define the capabilities required for veterinary graduates. This is part of a wider research agenda entitled 'VetSetGo' that seeks to build a collaborative outcomes and assessment framework building employability, resilience and veterinary graduate success.
- 1.2. This project consisted of four stages of which WPG contributed to Stage 2 (template analysis), 3 and 4:
  - *Stage 1 – Scoping, planning and literature review.* This harnessed the outputs from a comprehensive systematic review to explore the question 'Which *non-technical (professional) capabilities are most important to the success of graduate veterinarians?*' and captured evidence around client related aspects accordingly.
  - *Stage 2 – Qualitative phase.* This stage consisted of a series of interviews and focus groups held with veterinary clients to discuss skills and behaviours which they considered contributed to a positive experience. Following the interviews and focus groups, template analysis of these data provided a framework that defined capabilities related to client satisfaction and associated behavioural statements.
  - *Stage 3 – Survey creation and validation.* This stage consisted of a quantitative survey based on the outcomes of Stage 2. Small scale piloting was undertaken to finalise the survey.
  - *Stage 4 – Final survey distribution and analysis.* The final survey was distributed amongst UK veterinary clients and internationally. The data was analysed and a final framework defined.
- 1.3. The document therefore provides a summary overview of the activities undertaken by WPG and details the outcomes of the survey analysis which will be able to feed into final reporting.

# 2. Development of the Framework

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- 2.1. Data from the interviews and focus groups were transcribed; there were 14 transcripts in total.
- 2.2. In order to analyse the data and create a framework, template analysis was used, as it is a systematic and well-structured approach to handling textual data<sup>1</sup>. Template analysis is a well-established technique in qualitative research, and allows the researcher to thematically analyse relatively large amounts of data<sup>2</sup>. The 'template' is created as a list of codes that represent themes (or in this case behavioural indicators which represent the capabilities defined by the client group) within textual data (in this case, transcripts). The codes are typically organised hierarchically allowing a clear (and transparent) representation of the associations between themes. For example, there are broad themes (or capabilities that represent themes of client satisfaction) within which subsidiary themes (or behavioural indicators) will fall. Thus, in this context, template analysis enabled the robust creation of a framework that presented both broad capabilities, as well as more granular behaviours that veterinary clients value or expect from their vet.
- 2.3. In template analysis, an initial template is created and used to code the textual data. When some relevant text is found that does not fit logically with the existing codes, a change to the template is required.

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<sup>1</sup> Miles M, Huberman M (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

<sup>2</sup> King, N (1998). Template Analysis, in Symon, G. & Cassell, C. (Eds.) *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organisational Research: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage.

Where the required change in the coding structure is significant, the researcher may need to adjust the earlier coding of transcripts to fit the new version of the template. The work may require iterations of such changes to the template<sup>3</sup>.

2.4. One of the main advantages of template analysis is that it allows the reader to gain a clear overview of the themes identified in the analysis and therefore lends itself appropriate for this type of research. It also enables the researcher to reduce large amounts of unstructured text into a structured format which is relevant and manageable for the evaluation<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.5. **Creation of the Template**

2.5.1. The interviews were coded according to the following definition '*behaviours identified that defined aspects of client satisfaction with a vet or veterinary graduate*'.

2.5.2. An initial template was devised based on themes emerging from analysis of a subset of the interview transcripts (n=3) by one researcher. A second researcher independently analysed these transcripts and produced their own initial template. A one-hour meeting was then held between the two researchers to agree an initial template. During the meeting, the two independently created templates were compared, contrasted and discussed until a consensus was reached as to an initial template.

2.5.3. The initial template was modified after six transcripts had been coded, and then again after 10 transcripts. At this stage, after 10 transcripts had been coded, the researcher who had previously been involved in creating the initial template was provided with two transcripts and asked to code them independently using the most recent template. This was done to provide a quality check of the analysis to ensure it was not being systematically distorted in some manner by the researchers' own preconceptions and assumptions. The similarities and differences were discussed to agree revisions to the themes. Two more transcripts were coded to create the fourth iteration of the template.

2.5.4. This fourth iteration of the template was then shared with the wider research team and feedback sought. Small changes were made to the wording of some of the indicators at this stage. Following this, the results from the interviews and focus groups were also cross-referenced with the ASME systematic review to ensure all relevant behaviours had been captured within the framework. It was perceived that all relevant behaviours were included, however small wording changes were made to some of the indicators.

2.5.5. The fifth iteration of the template was created by analysing the final two transcripts, and through successive readings of all the transcripts, which were refined based on the latest iteration of the template.

## 2.6. **Validation of the Capabilities Framework**

2.6.1. The final template grouped the behavioural indicators into six broad themes. To ensure that the behavioural indicators were grouped under the correct broad theme, and were representative of that theme, further analysis was carried out. Each behavioural indicator from the template analysis was recorded on a separate card with the aim of grouping the indicators into similar themes. This technique is known as card sorting, where a group of subject experts are guided to

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<sup>3</sup> Crabtree B.F, Miller W.L (1992). *Doing qualitative research*. London: Sage.

<sup>4</sup> Welsh D.H.B, & Carraher S.M. (2009). An examination of the relationship between the mission of the university and the business school. *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*

generate a category tree or groupings<sup>5</sup>. To perform the card sort, two experienced researchers (who had previously not been involved in the template analysis) worked together for two hours to group the behaviours recorded on the cards into similar themes.

- 2.6.2. The two researchers who had carried out the card sort, the lead researcher and the supporting researcher held a one-hour meeting to discuss the outcomes of the card sort and finalise the broad themes and inclusion of the behavioural indicators within these themes. There was a high level of agreement between the researchers both in relation to the overall themes, and the behavioural indicators that sat within these. The themes and the behavioural indicators were discussed and justification for inclusion considered until consensus was reached regarding the final number of broad themes and grouping of the behavioural indicators within each of these broad themes. This resulted in the same six themes as defined through the template analysis although a small number of indicators (n=4) were moved to different themes. Two of the capability headings were also re-defined slightly.
- 2.6.3. Following this, a senior researcher, experienced in job analysis and competency design (and who had not been involved previously in the project), reviewed the content and the constructs within the framework. This process was intended to confirm the results and that the indicators are representative of the capabilities defined, thus helping to establish the content validity (and to some extent construct validity) of the framework. A small change was made to the wording of one indicator as a result of this review stage.
- 2.6.4. Finally, the wider research team reviewed the final framework. A small change was made to the wording of one indicator following this review stage.

## 2.7. Small Scale Piloting of the Capabilities Framework

- 2.7.1. Once the wider research team had agreed on the capabilities framework, a draft of the validation survey was shared with several veterinary clients to gather feedback. Feedback suggested that the language used within the survey was relatively academic. The language across the indicators was therefore adapted by the research team to simplify the language used to ensure the framework was accessible and engagement from veterinary clients was maximised as part of the validation survey. For example, the behavioural indicator '*Presents multiple options to the client, articulating an appraisal of the different options available and empowering the client to make an informed decision*' was adapted to '*Empowers you to make an informed decision by explaining all of the options available to you*'. Care was taken in ensuring that the structure of the framework developed through the template analysis process was retained.
- 2.7.2. Consideration of the language used is an important aspect to the development of capability frameworks, particularly in the context of confirming the purpose of the framework. For a framework that is to be used for selection into a role or training, for progression during training, or for formal appraisal then the use of more academic language may be appropriate in order to enable synergy with other academic resources (such as a curriculum) or amalgamation between different frameworks. However, where a framework such as this is to be used for the purpose of interactions with the veterinary client (i.e. client satisfaction questionnaire), less academic language may be preferable to ensure it is easily accessible to all.

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<sup>5</sup> Miles, M., & Huberman, M. (1984) *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Beverly Hills CA: Sage.

## 2.8. Final Capabilities Framework

2.8.1. The final framework that is presented in Table 1 below provides six capabilities and their associated behavioural indicators<sup>6</sup>. The provision of broad capabilities enables a high-level overview of the expectations of veterinary clients. The behavioural indicators provide a more detailed definition of what the capability encompasses.

**Table 1: Capability Framework**

	Capability	Behavioural Indicator
1	Client Relationships	1.1 Is friendly, approachable and courteous
		1.2 Acknowledges your emotions and feelings; demonstrates empathy
		1.3 Shows compassion and kindness towards you; provides reassurance
		1.4 Respects your ideas, concerns and decisions
		1.5 Shows patience in difficult situations; ensures that you do not feel rushed
		1.6 Builds rapport with you to develop a trusting partnership
		1.7 Checks that you are comfortable with next steps and able to care for your animal appropriately
		1.8 Recognises the human-animal bond, including your insight and knowledge regarding your animal
		1.9 Educates you to take a proactive role in care and preventative treatment
		1.10 Is accommodating and flexible in meeting your needs and requests where appropriate
2	Professionalism	2.1 Shows equality in their approach; treats all kinds of animals equally e.g. small animals or farm animals
		2.2 Is honest and clear about the cost of treatment options or procedures (e.g. not led by financial gain or sales)
		2.3 Is fair; does not blame you or make you feel guilty
		2.4 Is professional in their appearance and approach, including when interacting with colleagues; is punctual
		2.5 Is open and honest with you; is realistic about long term expectations
		2.6 Is calm, manages their own emotions in difficult situations or conversations
		2.7 Maintains a hygienic working environment
3	Communication Skills	3.1 Tailors their communication to your understanding; avoids jargon and technical terms
		3.2 Clearly explains diagnoses, treatment options, implications and costs
		3.3 Asks open questions to gain information and explores your concerns
		3.4 Shows active listening and creates a two-way conversation with you; seeks your viewpoint
		3.5 Takes a considerate and tactful approach to sensitive information
		3.6 Shows good non-verbal communication skills, e.g. eye contact, nodding to show understanding

<sup>6</sup> Please note that this is the final capabilities framework, following minor revisions after the validation survey.

4	Decision Making and Problem Solving	4.1	Empowers you to make an informed decision by explaining all of the options available to you
		4.2	Balances your animal's needs with your needs, expectations and financial constraints
		4.3	Is proactive in treating the cause rather than just the symptoms
		4.4	Is decisive; quickly assesses the urgency of the situation and takes appropriate action
		4.5	Demonstrates good knowledge about veterinary medicine and surgery
5	Commitment to Animal Welfare	5.1	Shows a genuine interest in your animal(s), asking questions about their needs or personality
		5.2	Handles your animal(s) with confidence and care, in a way that your animal(s) responds well to
		5.3	Shows compassion towards animals; prioritises your animal's wellbeing and quality of life
		5.4	Adapts the way that your animal is handled, and examined, to your specific animal
6	Quality Management and Organisation	6.1	Prepares for your consultations (e.g. checking records beforehand) to ensure the highest quality care is provided
		6.2	Committed to good aftercare; is proactive in following up and keeps you updated
		6.3	Values continuity of care (i.e. provides you and your animal with the experience of a coordinated and smooth progression of care) and works with you to achieve this where possible
		6.4	Is open about when they do not know something
		6.5	Is committed to learning from their experiences or mistakes, so they can continue to improve your animal's care
		6.6	Gives you a sense of confidence in their skills
		6.7	Keeps up-to-date with the latest research and treatments
		6.8	Seeks advice from colleagues to ensure the best possible treatment for your animal(s)
		6.9	Is committed to delivering high quality care and striving for excellence

## 2.9. Qualitative Illustrative Examples

2.9.1. Example quotes from the consultation are provided in Table 2 to illustrate how the information from the interviews and focus groups contributed to the development of the capabilities and behavioural indicators.

**Table 2: Example Quotes from Transcripts**

<b>Client Relationships</b>	<p><i>"...he was... very chatty, but concentrated on what he was doing, and introduced himself... and he was interested, and we actually stood and chatted going on for an hour there when he finished up just about random stuff."</i></p> <p><i>"As long as they appreciate the fact that if we phoned them we need them for something, and they're my sheep, don't come here and start preaching to me that you know better."</i></p> <p><i>"... they're prepared to pass on their knowledge to you, which I think's imperative</i></p>
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	<p><i>because if they can pass on their knowledge to you as the owner, then you can recognise with your cat when it really needs urgent treatment.”</i></p>
<b>Professionalism</b>	<p><i>“...they’re always very thorough with their cleanliness ...”</i></p> <p><i>“I would say it was the same level of attention and respect as for a valuable pedigree dog or whatever it was, even though it’s only a duck.”</i></p> <p><i>“... they did look scruffy. They used to come to the village and they used to put the vets on the table that the village hall used to use. And they always looked scruffy. And I used to think, oh, that’s a bit off putting, because they didn’t look professional.”</i></p>
<b>Communication Skills</b>	<p><i>“... be able to put it in language that doesn’t treat you like an idiot, but at the same time isn’t too technical, because I’m not a scientist...”</i></p> <p><i>“They need to listen, they need to ask questions about the background... And it is simply they have to ask the right questions, they have to pay attention to what you’re saying.”</i></p> <p><i>“Telling you exactly why they’re doing that, what they’re looking for, what it should be like, what’s correct, what’s not.”</i></p>
<b>Decision Making and Problem Solving</b>	<p><i>“Sensitivity not just to the emotional side but also the financial side of things as well.”</i></p> <p><i>“Yes I think everybody needs help making that decision don’t they? It’s a difficult decision to make in isolation.”</i></p> <p><i>“... because you obviously look to them to be the experienced professional, so you do trust their judgement, however there are plenty of occasions where it’s important that we have a say in what happens as well.”</i></p>
<b>Commitment to Animal Welfare</b>	<p><i>“...especially a vet, if you get that feeling from them that they love what they’re doing that gives you that trust and that loading there that, ‘Yeah, I can let this person do what they need to do.’”</i></p> <p><i>“Well just looking after the horses and doing the best for the horse really.”</i></p> <p><i>“Treat them like your animal matters.”</i></p>
<b>Commitment to Quality and the Profession</b>	<p><i>“... he’d obviously gone into the files or spoke to one of the other ones or whatever which was good, so he knew what he was coming to which I always find quite good as well.”</i></p> <p><i>“And they phoned me and they kept in touch...”</i></p> <p><i>“They don’t feel threatened by another person or vet or whoever it is knowing more than them. Just feed off them.”</i></p>

### 3. Administration and Quantitative Analysis of the Online Validation Questionnaire

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- 3.1. The behavioural indicators contained in the framework were formatted into an online validation questionnaire to be completed by veterinary clients. The aim of the validation questionnaire was to validate the capabilities and behavioural indicators included within the framework by gaining wider feedback on the importance of the identified criteria.
- 3.2. Validation questionnaire data was analysed both quantitatively (numerical ratings) and qualitatively (open ended responses) to triangulate the findings. Quantitative responses to questions were provided using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not important to 5 = Extremely important). Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each capability in relation to how important this behaviour or characteristic was to their satisfaction as a veterinary client.
- 3.3. Respondents were also invited to provide further comments in relation to the framework. Qualitative comments were coded using content analysis and grouped into several super-ordinate themes.
- 3.4. The questionnaire was accessible for online completion for three weeks between 22nd November 2016 and 31st December 2016 and was distributed as widely as possible to veterinary clients in the UK, Australia, United States, Canada and New Zealand.
- 3.5. A total of 1599 individuals accessed the online survey, of whom 1580 respondents consented to their data being used for validation of the framework. 1443 respondents rated the importance of the first behavioural indicator, and 1275 rated the last.
- 3.6. Demographic details of clients were collected at the beginning of the survey for diversity monitoring purposes. Table 3 summarises the data. The majority of respondents were female (91%). Respondents were from a range of age groups. The majority of respondents indicated that they resided in either the UK (50%) or Australia (46%).

**Table 3: Demographics**

		Number	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	124	9%
	Female	1312	91%
	Prefer not to say	9	1%
<b>Age</b>	19 or below	39	3%
	20-29	186	13%
	30-39	208	14%
	40-49	291	20%
	50-59	359	25%
	60-69	235	16%
	70 or over	116	8%
	Prefer not to disclose	15	1%
<b>Country of Residence</b>	Australia	669	46%
	Canada	10	1%
	New Zealand	1	0%
	United Kingdom	722	50%
	United States	32	2%
	Other	14	1%

- 3.7. Details in relation to respondents' category of animal ownership was also captured and is presented in Table 4, below. Respondents could check more than one category for animal ownership, therefore the percentage totals more than 100%. The proportion of respondents who selected more than one category is also indicated. Most respondents indicated that they were small animal owners.

**Table 4: Animal Ownership**

		Number	Percentage
<b>Animal Ownership Category</b>	Equine	441	30%
	Farm	93	6%
	Small Animal	1375	95%
	<i>Multiple Categories</i>	<i>397</i>	<i>27%</i>

- 3.8. Details in relation to respondents' years as an animal owner was also captured and is presented in Table 5, below. The majority of respondents indicated that they have been an animal owner for over 25 years.

**Table 5: Years as an Animal Owner**

		Number	Percentage
<b>Years as an Animal Owner</b>	0-5 years	116	8%
	6-14 years	209	14%
	15-24 years	276	19%
	25+ years	845	58%

3.9. **Analysis of Overall Importance of Capabilities**

- 3.9.1. Table 6 provides the descriptive statistics and spread of ratings pertaining to respondents' perceived importance of each identified capability (in response to the question '*Please look at the following statements. Using a scale of 1-5 (1 'Not Important' to 5 'Extremely Important'), please indicate how important each one is to you regarding your animal(s).*').
- 3.9.2. Inspection of the mean importance ratings indicates that most respondents perceived that each capability was at least 'very important' to them, as a client in relation to their satisfaction, since all mean ratings are above 3.5. The frequency of response ratings also demonstrates this, with comparatively very few ratings of 'slightly important' and 'not important'.
- 3.9.3. The capability with the highest rating of perceived importance overall was 'Commitment to Animal Welfare' (mean 4.72), which was closely followed by 'Decision Making and Problem Solving' (mean 4.69) and 'Commitment to Quality and the Profession' (mean 4.67); all three were rated, on average, as 'extremely important'. 'Professionalism' (4.44) and 'Communication Skills' (4.39). 'Client Relationships' had the lowest reported mean (4.21); although stakeholders still rated this capability as 'very important'.

**Table 6. Descriptive Statistics and Frequency of Response Ratings for Importance of Capabilities**

Capability	All respondents				Frequency of Response Ratings (%)				
	N	Range	Mean	SD	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
<b>Client Relationships</b>	1446	4	4.21	.79	5 (0%)	21 (1%)	238 (16%)	579 (40%)	603 (42%)
<b>Professionalism</b>	1394	3	4.44	.64	0 (0%)	5 (0%)	98 (7%)	568 (41%)	723 (52%)
<b>Communication Skills</b>	1350	4	4.39	.68	1 (0%)	12 (1%)	107 (8%)	569 (42%)	661 (49%)
<b>Decision Making and Problem Solving</b>	1326	3	4.69	.51	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	24 (2%)	365 (28%)	936 (71%)
<b>Commitment to Animal Welfare</b>	1293	4	4.72	.53	1 (0%)	5 (0%)	34 (3%)	269 (21%)	984 (76%)
<b>Commitment to Quality and the Profession</b>	1273	4	4.67	.55	2 (0%)	3 (0%)	29 (2%)	351 (29%)	888 (70%)

3.9.4. A number of respondents (16%) rated the capability area ‘Client Relationships’ as ‘Moderately Important’. Upon review of the qualitative comments of these respondents, it is suggested that these individuals have rated ‘Client Relationships’ as such because, while they do appreciate a good relationship with their vet, they are more concerned about the treatment of their animal, for example: *“You like to be treated well, but you want the animals treated as the first priority.”*; *“I don't care how they treat me, I only care about the concern and care they show my pet.”*; *“It is more important for the vet to build a rapport with the pet.”* Therefore, it seems that while client relationships are considered ‘very’ or ‘extremely important’ to most respondents, a proportion consider this capability as ‘Moderately Important’, in comparison to capabilities such as ‘Commitment to Animal Welfare’.

3.9.5. **Animal Ownership Category:** Table 7 presents the same mean ratings by animal ownership category. Respondents who identified themselves as small animal owners rated ‘Commitment to Animal Welfare’ as the highest capability in terms of perceived importance (mean 4.73), and ‘Client Relationships’ as the perceived least important capability (4.22). For those who identified with farm animal ownership, ‘Commitment to Quality and the Profession’ was the highest rated capability in terms of perceived importance (4.69) and ‘Communication Skills’ were perceived as least important (4.17). Finally, for those who identified as equine owners, ‘Decision Making and Problem Solving’ was perceived as the most important capability (4.70) and ‘Client Relationships’ as the least important (4.18). As all capability areas were rated on average as at least ‘very important’, this indicates the importance of each capability across each ownership group.

**Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Importance Ratings of Capabilities by Animal Ownership**

Capability	Small Animals				Farm				Equine			
	N	Range	Mean	SD	N	Range	Mean	SD	N	Range	Mean	SD
Client Relationships	1371	4	4.22	.79	92	3	4.24	.72	440	3	4.18	.78
Professionalism	1323	3	4.44	.64	90	3	4.34	.62	420	3	4.37	.68
Communication Skills	1285	4	4.40	.68	88	3	4.17	.78	406	3	4.30	.72
Decision Making and Problem Solving	1260	3	4.69	.50	84	2	4.65	.53	400	2	4.70	.49
Commitment to Animal Welfare	1228	4	4.73	.53	80	3	4.64	.64	389	2	4.68	.55
Commitment to Quality and the Profession	1211	4	4.67	.54	77	2	4.69	.49	381	3	4.63	.58

3.9.6. To allow analysis of group differences to be run, data were re-coded into four categories; small animal owners, farm owners, equine owners, and multiple owners. Therefore, there were fewer respondents in each of the three ownership groups, due to some respondents identifying with more than one ownership group. Table 8 shows the breakdown by category.

**Table 8: Animal Ownership – Recoded for ANOVA**

		Number	Percentage
Animal Ownership Category	Equine	66	5%
	Farm	7	0.005%
	Small Animal	978	68%
	Multiple	397	27%

3.9.7. ANOVAs were conducted to examine whether differences in perceived importance ratings of the capabilities provided by respondents from different ownerships groups were statistically significant. Due to the small sample size of the farm owners group, this group was not included in

the analysis. Three statistically significant differences between the ratings from animal ownership groups were found;

- 'Professionalism' (F (2,1383) = 5.34, p < 0.01) - post hoc tests revealed that the difference was between (4.48) and multiple owners (4.35).
- 'Communication Skills' (F (2,1339) = 6.15, p < 0.01) – again, post hoc tests revealed that the difference was between small animal owners (4.44) and multiple owners (4.30).
- 'Commitment to Animal Welfare' (F (2,1284) = 5.01, p < 0.01) - post hoc tests revealed that the difference was between small animal owners (4.75) and multiple owners (4.58).

3.9.8. It is difficult to make any conclusion as to why this may be, as the 'multiple owners' category is likely to encompass a broad range of clients, with different needs and expectations.

3.9.9. **Country of Residence:** Table 9 presents the same mean ratings by country of residence. Given the numbers sample sizes, the United States and Canada were combined for the analysis (n=42). Respondents in the United Kingdom and Australia rated 'Commitment to Animal Welfare' as the highest capability in terms of perceived importance (mean 4.73 and 4.74 respectively), and 'Client Engagement' as the perceived least important capability (mean 4.18 and 4.27 respectively). Respondents from the United States and Canada rated 'Commitment to Quality and the Profession' as the highest capability in terms of importance (mean 4.68), and 'Client Engagement' and 'Professionalism' as the lowest (mean both 4.07). However, this difference should be treated with caution given the comparatively smaller sample size of those who responded from the United States and Canada.

3.9.10. An ANOVA was conducted to examine whether differences in perceived importance ratings of the capabilities provided by respondents from different countries were statistically significant. Three statistically significant differences between the ratings from animal ownership groups were found;

- 'Professionalism' (F (2,1374) = 13.44, p < 0.001) - post hoc tests revealed that the differences were between each of the three groups – United Kingdom (4.39), Australia (4.52) and the United States and Canada (4.07).
- 'Communication Skills' (F (2,1330) = 6.44, p < 0.01) – post hoc tests revealed that the difference was between Australia (4.46), compared to both the United Kingdom (4.36) and the United States and Canada (4.15).
- 'Commitment to Animal Welfare' (F (2,1274) = 3.39, p < 0.05) - post hoc tests revealed that the difference was between Australia (4.74) and the United States and Canada (4.51).

3.9.11. Throughout these results, respondents from Australia were consistently rating the capabilities as more important. It may be interesting to further investigate why this may be, however, despite these differences, the results suggest that each of the capabilities is important across each country.

**Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Importance Ratings of Capabilities by Country of Residence**

Capability	United Kingdom				Australia				United States and Canada			
	N	Range	Mean	SD	N	Range	Mean	SD	N	Range	Mean	SD
<b>Client Relationships</b>	720	4	4.18	.79	668	4	4.27	.78	41	2	4.07	.85
<b>Professionalism</b>	689	3	4.39	.66	647	3	4.52	.59	41	3	4.07	.88
<b>Communication Skills</b>	666	3	4.36	.68	628	3	4.46	.64	39	3	4.15	.71
<b>Decision Making and Problem Solving</b>	655	3	4.71	.50	618	2	4.67	.52	37	1	4.57	.50
<b>Commitment to Animal Welfare</b>	633	2	4.73	.52	607	4	4.74	.53	37	2	4.51	.61
<b>Commitment to Quality and the Profession</b>	620	3	4.67	.55	601	4	4.67	.55	37	1	4.68	.47

3.9.12. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate which of the 'six veterinary skill areas are most important to you'. Respondents could choose up to three capabilities. Results are presented in Table 10, for the overall sample, as well as showing a breakdown by Animal Ownership and Country of Residence.

**Table 10. Ratings of Most Important Capabilities**

Capability	Overall	Animal Ownership			Country of Residence		
		Small Animals	Farm	Equine	United Kingdom	Australia	United States and Canada
Client Relationships	697	671	35	196	310	361	19
Professionalism	462	437	23	135	222	226	8
Communication Skills	446	424	29	137	217	210	13
Decision Making and Problem Solving	590	553	45	207	289	273	22
Commitment to Animal Welfare	787	760	46	227	386	375	21
Commitment to Quality and the Profession	785	744	53	240	384	361	31

3.9.13. Overall, clients most frequently selected ‘Client Relationships’, ‘Commitment to Animal Welfare’ and ‘Commitment to Quality and the Profession’ as the most important of the six capability areas.

3.9.14. **Animal Ownership Category:** When compared to the overall sample, small animal owners selected the same capability areas as most important. Farm and equine owners selected ‘Commitment to Animal Welfare’ and ‘Commitment to Quality and the Profession’ as most important, which was in line with the overall sample. However, they also indicated that ‘Decision Making and Problem Solving’ was one of the most important capabilities, which differs from the overall sample, where ‘Client Relationships’ was selected.

3.9.15. **Country of Residence:** When compared to the overall sample, respondents from the United Kingdom and Australia selected the same capability areas as being most important. Respondents from the United States and Canada selected ‘Commitment to Animal Welfare’ and ‘Commitment to Quality and the Profession’ as most important, which was in line with the overall sample. However, they also indicated that ‘Decision Making and Problem Solving’ was one of the most important capabilities, which differs from the overall sample, where ‘Client Relationships’ was selected. This difference should be interpreted with caution given the smaller sample size of respondents from the United States and Canada.

### 3.10. Behavioural Indicator Ratings

- 3.10.1. In addition to analysis of the capabilities overall, further analyses were undertaken with regards to the mean perceived importance of each behavioural indicator (see Appendix A).
- 3.10.2. **Overall:** Twenty-two behavioural indicators were rated, on average, as 'very important' (3.50 < mean < 4.49). The remaining nineteen indicators were rated, on average, as 'extremely important' (4.50 < mean). The highest overall indicator was *'Has good knowledge about veterinary medicine and surgery'* (4.85). The lowest rated indicator was *'Tailors their communication to your understanding; avoids jargon and technical terms'* (3.86).
- 3.10.3. **Animal Ownership Category:** When looking at **small animal owners**, the results were very similar to the overall results; likely reflective of the fact that most respondents were small animal owners. As with the overall sample, twenty-two behavioural indicators were rated as 'very important', and the remaining nineteen indicators were rated as 'extremely important'.
- 3.10.4. For the **farm owners**, twenty-seven behavioural indicators were rated as 'very important', and the remaining fourteen indicators were rated as 'extremely important'. When compared to the overall sample, five indicators were rated on average as 'very' rather than 'extremely' important: *'Checks that you are comfortable with next steps and able to care for your animal appropriately'*; *'Recognises the human-animal bond, including your insight and knowledge regarding your animal'*; *'Shows compassion towards animals; prioritises your animal's wellbeing and quality of life'*; *'Adapts the way that your animal is handled and examined to your specific animal'*; *'Keeps up-to-date with the latest research and treatments'*.
- 3.10.5. For the **equine owners**, twenty-six behavioural indicators were rated as 'very important', and the remaining fifteen indicators were rated as 'extremely important'. When compared to the overall sample, four indicators were rated on average as 'very' rather than 'extremely' important: *'Checks that you are comfortable with next steps and able to care for your animal appropriately'*; *'Recognises the human-animal bond, including your insight and knowledge regarding your animal'*; *'Adapts the way that your animal is handled and examined to your specific animal'*; *'Keeps up-to-date with the latest research and treatments'*. These results were very similar to farm owners, with just one behavioural indicator (*'Shows compassion towards animals; prioritises your animal's wellbeing and quality of life'*) falling into a different category of importance.
- 3.10.6. **Country of Residence:** Respondents from the **United Kingdom** rated twenty-five behavioural indicators, on average, as 'very important'. The remaining sixteen indicators were rated, on average, as 'extremely important'. When compared to the overall sample, three indicators were rated on average as 'very' rather than 'extremely' important: *'Checks that you are comfortable with next steps and able to care for your animal appropriately'*; *'Recognises the human-animal bond, including your insight and knowledge regarding your animal'*; *'Keeps up-to-date with the latest research and treatments'*.
- 3.10.7. Respondents from **Australia** rated twenty-one behavioural indicators, on average, as 'very important'. The remaining twenty indicators were rated, on average, as 'extremely important'. When compared to the overall sample, one indicator was rated on average as 'extremely' rather than 'very' important: *'Empowers you to make an informed decision by explaining all of the options available to you'*.
- 3.10.8. Respondents from the **United States and Canada** rated twenty-seven behavioural indicators, on average, as 'very important'. Eleven indicators were rated, on average, as 'extremely important',

and the remaining three indicators were rated on average as 'moderately important'. Several behavioural indicators fell into a different category of importance when compared to the overall sample, however, caution should be taken when interpreting these results given the relatively small sample of respondents from the United States and Canada.

## 4. Qualitative Results from the Validation Questionnaire

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- 4.1. Respondents were asked at the end of each capability section whether they had any comments about the capability area, or whether there was anything else that they thought should be included. The predominant purpose of this question was to enable respondents to identify if anything was missing from the framework, and thus could be used to refine or update the indicators. As such, this was the focus of the qualitative review.
- 4.2. Where appropriate, comments were used to make updates to the Capability Framework; a total of two behavioural indicators were updated as a result of the feedback. No new behavioural indicators were added to the framework.
- 4.3. Respondents also took the opportunity to comment more generally on the capability and these comments could generally be themed into the following areas;
  - **Client Relationships** (360 comments)
    - Comments in relation to the indicators / capability (209 comments)
      - Emphasis on the vet understanding and respecting the level of expertise of the animal owner, not patronising or overlooking their expertise; *"I like to feel that there are two people looking after my cat, myself and the vet. It's a partnership."*; *"I can't stress enough how important it is to me to build a trusting relationship with my vet."*
      - It was commonly highlighted that it is challenging to build a relationship with a vet when animal owners often are seen by a different vet at each visit.
      - It was commented that the relationship between vet and animal owner should feel similar to that between a GP and a patient.
      - The importance of empathy and ability to provide reassurance to the owner; *"Difficult situations regarding your pets can be made that little bit easier by the way a vet treats you"*.
      - The ability to adapt style to different clients was also raised.
    - Comments in relation to an indicator included in another capability (167 comments)
      - Suggestions that the relationship between vet and animal is more important than that between vet and animal owner. Some respondents suggested that their highest priority was the welfare of the animal and that a good relationship was not always necessary if it was at the expense of clinical competence. (*Commitment to Animal Welfare*).
      - The importance of active listening skills. (*Communication skills*).
    - Comments relevant to the general administration of the veterinary practice or non-veterinary staff (17 comments)

- Accessibility of services out of hours; availability of direct contact with vet (as opposed to through reception staff); overall smooth-running and organisation of the practice; relationships with reception staff.
  - Comments relating to personal experiences (*81 comments*)
    - A number of clients provided comments regarding their personal experiences.
- **Professionalism** (*234 comments*)
  - Comments in relation to the indicators / capability (*142 comments*)
    - A number of comments reflected the opinion that professional approach and hygiene are more important than professional appearance, particularly with regards to farm animals; *“They could be in a pair of board shorts and a vest and I wouldn’t care as long as they showed they knew what they were doing.”*
    - The importance of striking a balance between behaving professionally but still showing empathy and humanity was mentioned; *“Must be able to be professional but not aloof.”*
    - The importance of not allowing professionalism to prevent vets from being flexible in their approach was mentioned.
    - Honesty and openness were noted as very important attributes.
  - Comments in relation to an indicator included in another capability (*89 comments*)
    - As noted above, there were suggestions that appearance is less important when compared to other capabilities.
  - Comments relevant to the general administration of the veterinary practice or non-veterinary staff (*8 comments*)
    - Overall organisation of the practice; professionalism of reception staff; length of appointments; pressure from practice on vets to recommend certain treatments.
  - Comments relating to personal experiences (*75 comments*)
    - A number of clients provided comments regarding personal experiences.
  - Comments in relation to an indicator/attribute not included in the framework (*2 comments*)
    - Punctuality as a key aspect of professionalism (*this was added into Professionalism*).
    - Demonstrating professional behaviour towards other staff as well as clients (*this was added into Professionalism*).
- **Communication Skills** (*219 comments*)
  - Comments in relation to the indicators / capability (*149 comments*)
    - Emphasis on tailoring language to an appropriate level for the client; some clients may not want to hear ‘jargon’ but others may find it useful to understand veterinary terms; *“Don’t avoid technical terms altogether... just tailor language to suit the client.”*
    - Clear explanations especially relevant in situations when the owner is upset or emotional; *“Clear and concise communication is very important, especially in times of stress when I, as the client, may not be able to take in a lot of technical information.”*

- The importance of using non-verbal communication to show engagement with client's concerns.
    - Finding a balance between speaking and listening; *"Some vets do need to listen more and ask more questions."*
    - Some clients would find it helpful to have written notes to take home.
  - Comments relevant to assessing this capability at the point of selection (3 comments)
    - Highlighting the importance of selecting students with good communication skills.
  - Comments in relation to an indicator included in another capability (52 comments)
    - Communication with the animal was highlighted as being equally as important as communication with the owner (*Commitment to Animal Welfare*).
  - Comments relevant to the general administration of the veterinary practice or non-veterinary staff (4 comments)
    - Efficient communication by reception staff, and within the practice, is important.
  - Comments relating to personal experiences (47 comments)
    - A number of clients provided comments regarding personal experiences.
- **Decision Making and Problem Solving** (161 comments)
  - Comments in relation to the indicators / capability (110 comments)
    - The importance of balancing the animal's need with the client's needs, expectations and financial constraints; *"Sometimes you can feel that you are being backed to a corner with only one solution to a problem which might involve more money than you can afford."*
    - The importance of treating the cause and not just the symptoms.
    - Ability to make quick decisions when necessary (particularly important in emergencies), but not at the expense of quality.
  - Comments in relation to an indicator included in another capability (47 comments)
    - Vets being comfortable admitting when they do not know the answer and consulting a colleague or referring to a specialist in these situations (*Commitment to Quality and the Profession*).
  - Comments relevant to the general administration of the veterinary practice or non-veterinary staff (4 comments)
    - Decision-making skills also important for reception staff with regards to prioritising appointments.
  - Comments relating to personal experiences (22 comments)
    - A number of clients provided comments regarding personal experiences.
- **Commitment to Animal Welfare** (160 comments)
  - Comments in relation to the indicators / capability (104 comments)
    - Described as the highest priority for vets in a large number of comments; *"People who do not care about animal welfare and individual animals should not become vets."*

- Importance of getting to know an animal's unique personality; *"I absolutely appreciate when my vet knows my pets and their quirky personalities."*
  - Adapting approach to specific animals' needs.
  - Prioritising an animal's wellbeing over anything else (even if this requires addressing sensitive issues with the owner about the animal or treatment).
  - This includes never showing fear of an animal.
- Comments relevant to assessing this capability at the point of selection (11 comments)
  - Several comments that this should be an essential attribute in order to enter the profession.
- Comments in relation to an indicator included in another capability (17 comments)
- Comments relevant to the general administration of the veterinary practice or non-veterinary staff (2 comments)
  - Suggestion of practices participating in animal welfare programmes; costs of treatments.
- Comments relating to personal experiences (42 comments)
  - A number of clients provided comments regarding personal experiences.
- **Commitment to the Quality and the Profession** (137 comments)
  - Comments in relation to the indicators / capability (80 comments)
    - Preparation, follow-up and good organisation are especially important to ensure continuity of care in practices where it is not possible for clients to see the same vet each visit.
    - Emphasis on the importance of continued learning and keeping up to date with research.
    - The importance of acknowledging own limitations and knowing when to consult another vet or research an issue further; *"No vet can know everything about everything, but being open and honest and readily seeking advice only increases client confidence rather than diminishing it."*
  - Comments in relation to an indicator included in another capability (22 comments)
  - Comments relevant to the general administration of the veterinary practice or non-veterinary staff (8 comments)
    - Practices supporting vets in continuing their professional development; aiming to allow clients to see the same vet each time to improve continuity of care.
  - Comments relating to personal experiences (32 comments)
    - A number of clients provided comments regarding personal experiences.

## 5. Summary and Conclusions

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- 5.1. An established approach to capability framework development was undertaken, which involved a series of validation stages to ensure the delivery of a robust framework that addressed the breadth of behaviours that are valued by veterinary clients.
- 5.2. Through analysis of the data, **six capabilities were identified**, each represented by between four and ten behavioural indicators. The provision of broad capabilities enables a high-level overview of the expectations of veterinary clients. The behavioural indicators provide a more detailed definition of what the capability encompasses. The inclusion of behavioural indicators is particularly useful when supporting progression through training or selecting an individual for a role where such granularity is necessary. The behavioural indicators can also be used for evaluation purposes. It is important to note that the framework represents capabilities from a client perspective, and therefore will not cover the breadth of requirements of a successful vet, rather what is important and observable to a client.
- 5.3. Results from the validation questionnaire found support for each of the six capabilities outlined in the framework; overall, each capability was rated on average as at least 'very important'. 'Commitment to Animal Welfare', 'Decision Making and Problem Solving' and 'Commitment to Quality and the Profession', were all rated on average as 'extremely important'. Therefore, providing support for the inclusion of all capabilities and behavioural indicators within the framework.
- 5.4. Overall, the capability with the **highest rating** of perceived importance was 'Commitment to Animal Welfare' and the capability with the **lowest rating** was 'Client Relationships'. When asked to select up to three capability areas which were most important to them, overall, respondents most frequently selected 'Commitment to Animal Welfare' and 'Commitment to Quality and the Profession', which is consistent with the ratings of importance. Interesting, 'Client Relationships' was also frequently selected, although it had been rated as least important when rated independently.
  - 5.4.1. On review of the data, it is likely that the reason for this capability being rated lower in terms of importance in the independent ratings is that a proportion of respondents (18%) did not rate the capability as 'very' or 'extremely important'. As discussed in Section 3, respondents' reasoning for this is that, perhaps unsurprisingly, as an animal owner, their primary concern is the welfare of their animal rather than the client relationship, as reflected in qualitative feedback. While this group of responders have reduced the average perceived importance of this capability when it was rated independently, the impact that this group had on the three most important capability areas was smaller.
- 5.5. **Some differences** regarding the extent of perceived importance were observed when comparing **ownership groups**. The responses from **small animal owners** were consistent with the overall sample (likely reflective of the large sample size). However, the average responses from farm and equine owners were different; **farm animal owners** rated 'Commitment to Quality and the Profession' highest in terms of perceived importance and 'Communication Skills' as least important. **Equine owners** rated 'Decision Making and Problem Solving' as the most important capability and 'Client Relationships' as the least important. However, as all capability areas were rated on average as at least 'very important', this suggests that the framework is representative across ownership groups.
- 5.6. There were **very few differences** between the overall sample, and the sample split by **country of residence**. Thus, suggesting that the capabilities framework is suitable for use across countries. The only differences were reflected in the respondents from **United States and Canada**, though, these differences should be interpreted with caution given the relatively small number of respondents in this group.

## Appendix A: Behavioural Indicator Means

	Overall Importance	Small Animals	Farm	Equine	UK	Australia	United States & Canada
<b>Client Relationships</b>							
Is friendly, approachable and courteous	4.38	4.39	4.18	4.26	4.31	4.48	4.02
Acknowledges your emotions and feelings; demonstrates empathy	4.21	4.22	3.95	4.00	4.09	4.37	3.98
Shows compassion and kindness towards you; provides reassurance	4.30	4.32	3.96	4.10	4.18	4.45	4.07
Respects your ideas, concerns and decisions	4.33	4.33	4.22	4.31	4.30	4.37	4.36
Shows patience in difficult situations; ensures that you do not feel rushed	4.42	4.43	4.16	4.37	4.39	4.47	4.29
Builds rapport with you to develop a trusting partnership	4.38	4.38	4.36	4.35	4.36	4.41	4.24
Checks that you are comfortable with next steps and able to care for your animal appropriately	4.51	4.51	4.32	4.47	4.49	4.54	4.39
Recognises the human-animal bond, including your insight and knowledge regarding your animal	4.52	4.53	4.28	4.42	4.46	4.60	4.37
Educates you to enable you to take a proactive role in care and preventative treatment	4.53	4.54	4.58	4.51	4.51	4.55	4.52
Is accommodating and flexible in meeting your needs and requests where appropriate	4.09	4.09	3.92	4.03	3.98	4.22	4.00
<b>Professionalism</b>							
Shows equality in their approach; treats all kinds of animals equally e.g. small animals or farm animals	3.95	3.96	3.73	3.81	3.86	4.10	3.29
Is honest and clear about the cost of treatment options or procedures (e.g. not led by financial gain or sales)	4.67	4.67	4.59	4.66	4.63	4.70	4.71
Is fair, does not blame you or make you feel guilty	4.13	4.13	3.81	3.99	4.05	4.22	4.00
Is professional in their approach and appearance	4.18	4.18	4.02	4.07	4.13	4.26	3.61
Is open and honest with you; is realistic about long term expectations	4.70	4.70	4.64	4.70	4.72	4.68	4.68
Is calm, manages their own emotions in difficult situations or conversations	4.23	4.23	4.08	4.18	4.17	4.29	4.07
Maintains a hygienic working environment	4.66	4.67	4.52	4.56	4.62	4.71	4.59
<b>Communication Skills</b>							
Tailors their communication to your understanding; avoids jargon and technical terms	3.86	3.86	3.58	3.76	3.79	4.00	3.00
Clearly explains diagnoses, treatment	4.64	4.64	4.51	4.61	4.64	4.66	4.56

options, implications and costs							
Asks open questions to gain information and explores your concerns	4.30	4.31	4.18	4.22	4.27	4.35	4.18
Shows active listening and creates a two-way conversation with you; seeks your viewpoint	4.34	4.34	4.20	4.25	4.29	4.39	4.32
Takes a considerate and tactful approach to sensitive information	4.21	4.21	3.95	4.05	4.13	4.32	3.90
Shows good non-verbal communication skills, e.g. eye contact, nodding to show understanding	3.87	3.88	3.51	3.66	3.75	4.05	3.23
<b>Decision Making and Problem Solving</b>							
Empowers you to make an informed decision by explaining all of the options available to you	4.47	4.47	4.38	4.47	4.45	4.50	4.35
Balances your animal's needs with your needs, expectations and financial constraints	4.22	4.22	4.12	4.22	4.14	4.32	4.22
Proactive; treats the cause rather than just the symptoms	4.65	4.64	4.62	4.63	4.63	4.67	4.59
Is decisive; quickly assesses the urgency of the situation and takes appropriate action	4.56	4.56	4.52	4.58	4.59	4.56	4.38
Has good knowledge about veterinary medicine and surgery	4.85	4.85	4.84	4.84	4.85	4.84	4.86
<b>Commitment to Animal Welfare</b>							
Shows a genuine interest in your animal(s), asking questions about their needs or personality	4.28	4.30	3.87	4.10	4.23	4.36	4.05
Handles your animal(s) with confidence and care, in a way to which your animal(s) responds well	4.68	4.68	4.55	4.64	4.69	4.68	4.51
Shows compassion towards animals; prioritises your animal's wellbeing and quality of life	4.70	4.71	4.48	4.65	4.71	4.70	4.54
Adapts the way that your animal is handled and examined to your specific animal	4.56	4.57	4.38	4.48	4.55	4.58	4.41
<b>Commitment to Quality and the Profession</b>							
Prepares for your consultations (e.g. checking records beforehand) to ensure the highest quality care is provided	4.11	4.11	4.00	4.04	4.10	4.15	3.84
Committed to good aftercare; is proactive in following up and keeps you updated	4.28	4.28	4.09	4.19	4.26	4.32	3.86
Values continuity of care (i.e. provides you and your animal with the experience of a coordinated and smooth progression of care) and works with you to achieve this where possible	4.28	4.29	3.92	4.21	4.26	4.33	3.95
Is open about when they do not know	4.52	4.52	4.54	4.54	4.52	4.53	4.43

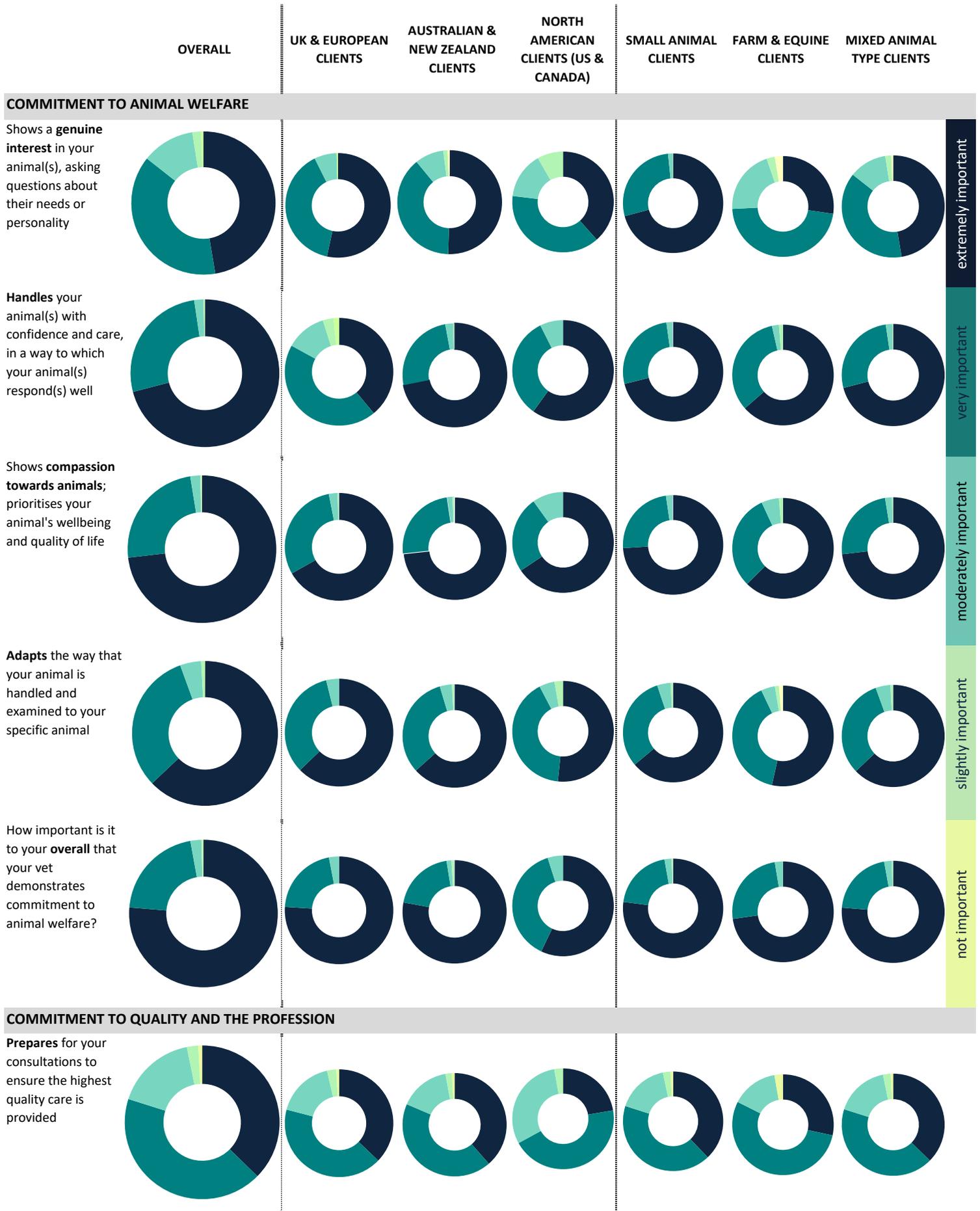
something							
Is committed to learning from their experiences or mistakes, so they can continue to improve your animal's care	<b>4.58</b>	4.59	4.56	4.57	4.60	4.55	4.65
Gives you a sense of confidence in their skills	<b>4.59</b>	4.59	4.55	4.58	4.62	4.58	4.32
Keeps up-to-date with the latest research and treatments	<b>4.51</b>	4.52	4.44	4.44	4.48	4.56	4.41
Seeks advice from colleagues to ensure the best possible treatment for your animal	<b>4.55</b>	4.56	4.53	4.55	4.59	4.55	4.32
Is committed to delivering high quality care and striving for excellence	<b>4.72</b>	4.73	4.64	4.72	4.75	4.70	4.68

## LIKERT SCALE RATING RESPONSES OF THE SIX VETERINARY SKILL AREAS

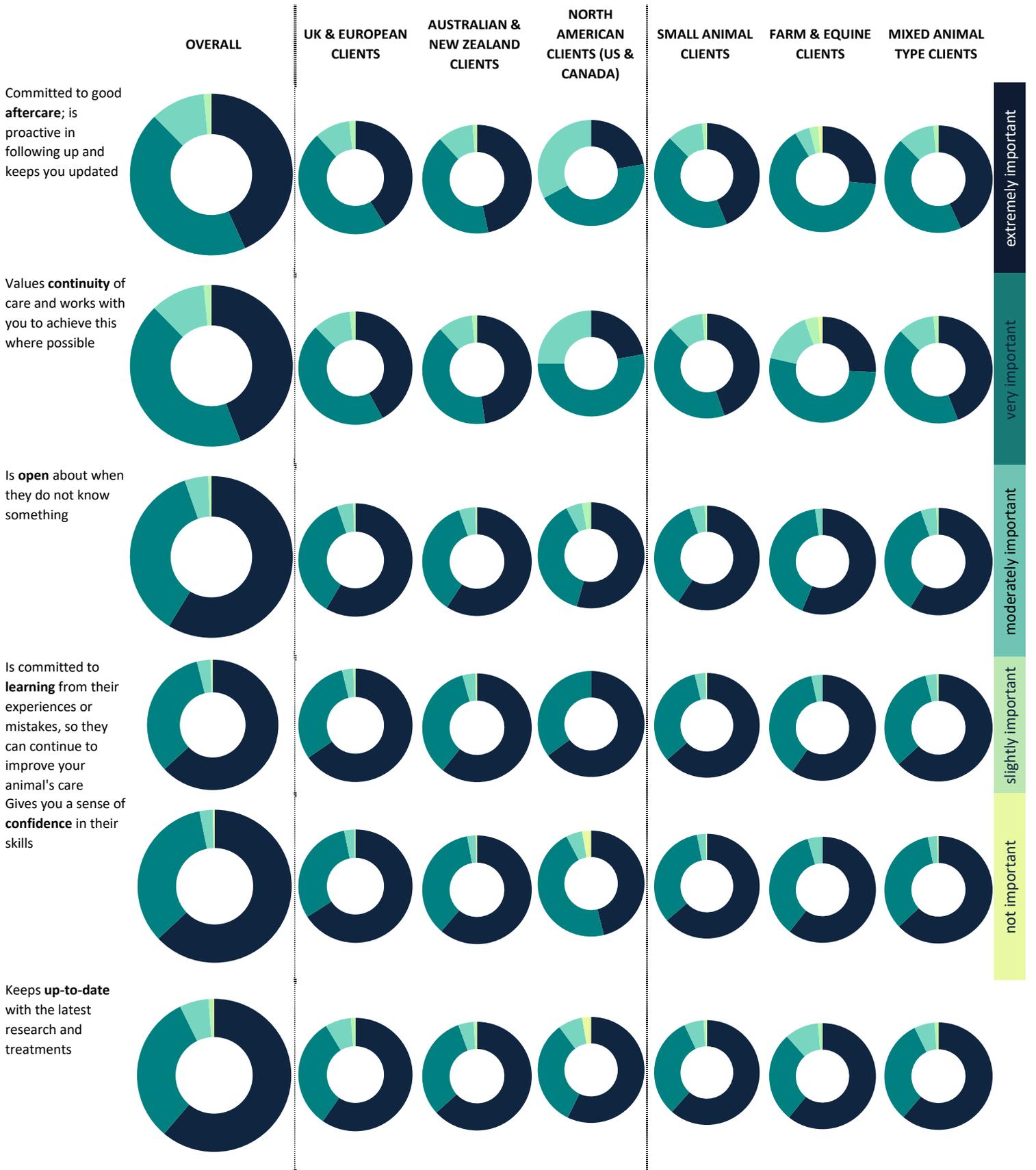
WITH DOMAINS LISTED IN RANK ORDER, ACCORDING TO MOST IMPORTANCE TO CLIENTS



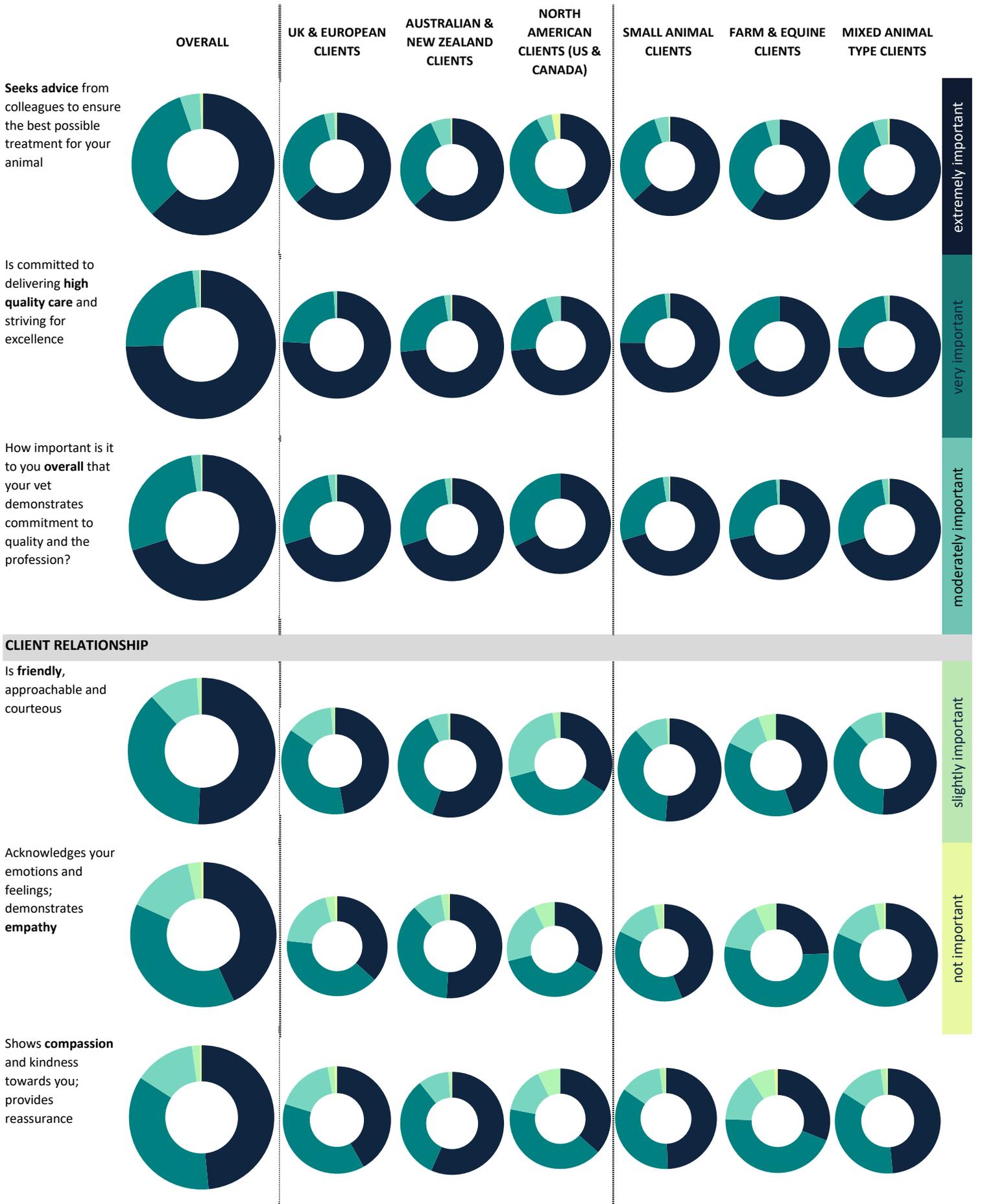
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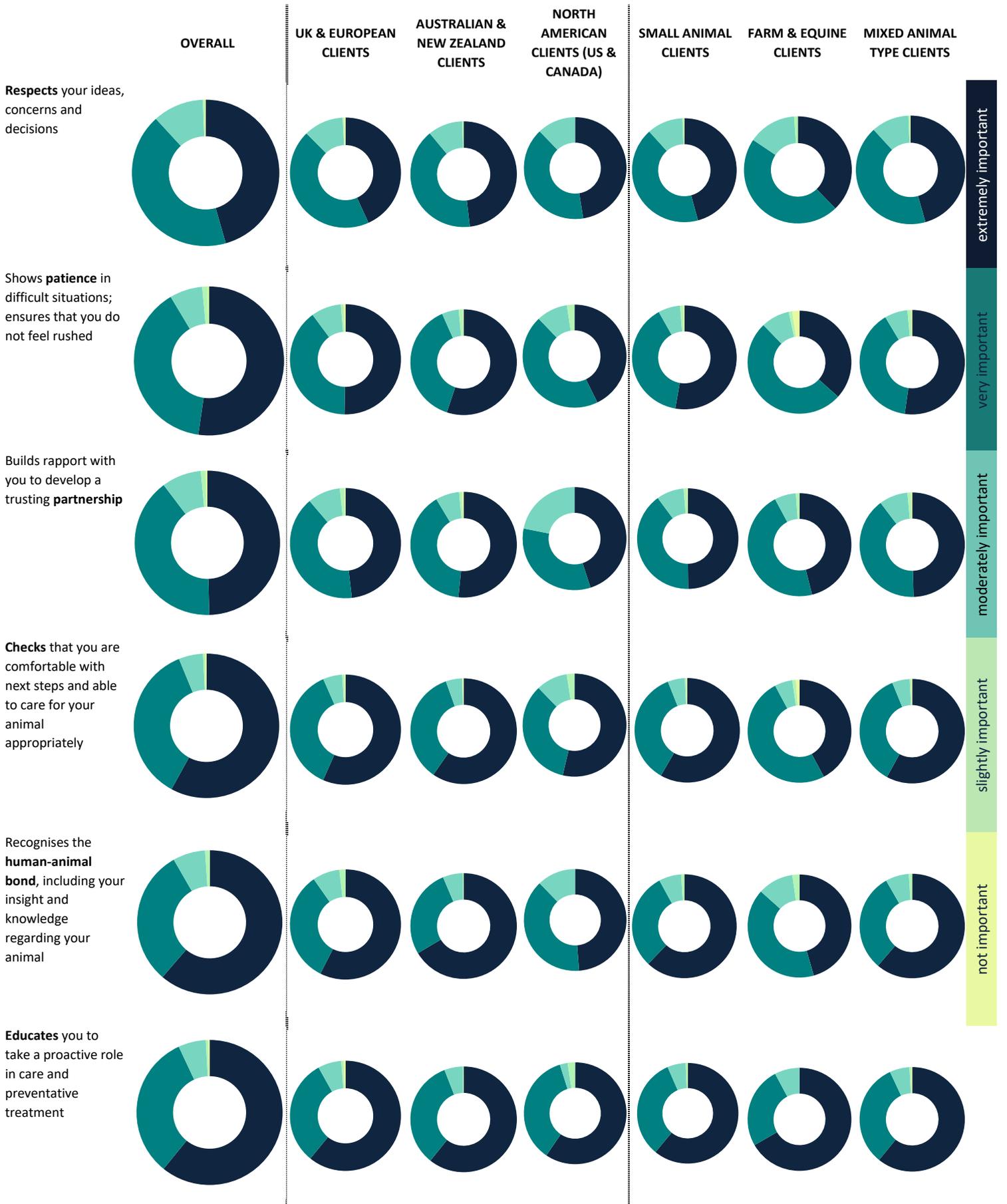
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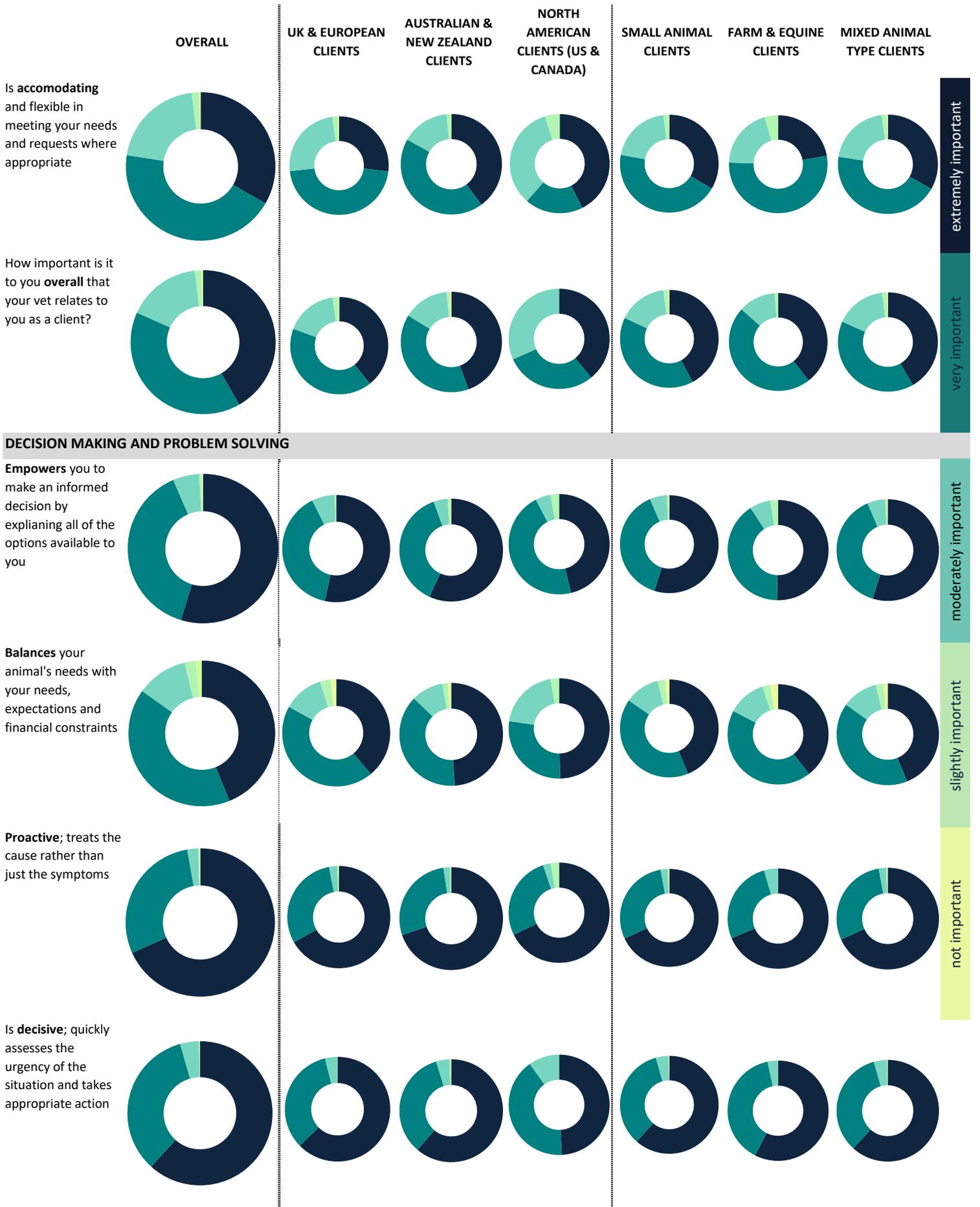
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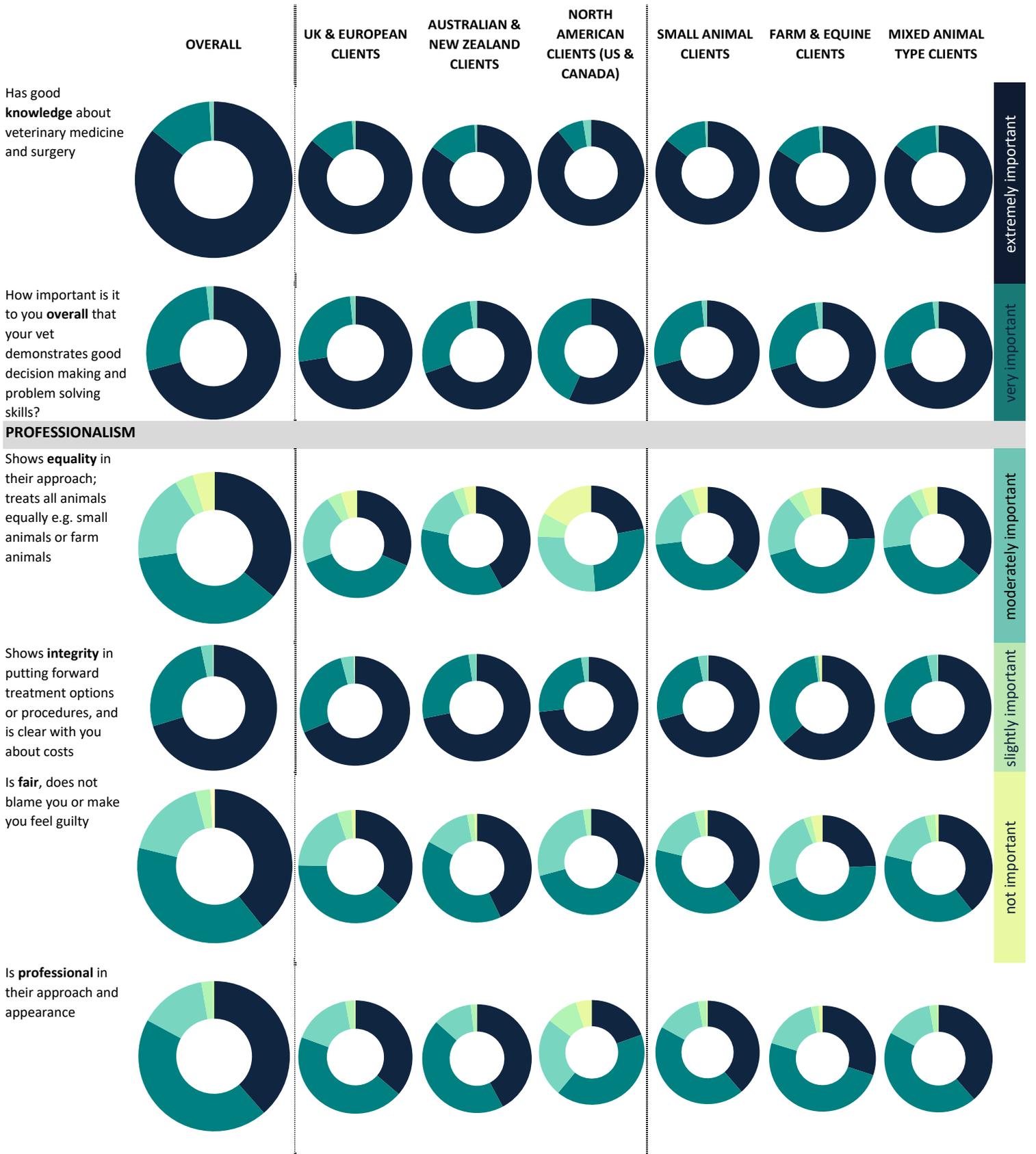
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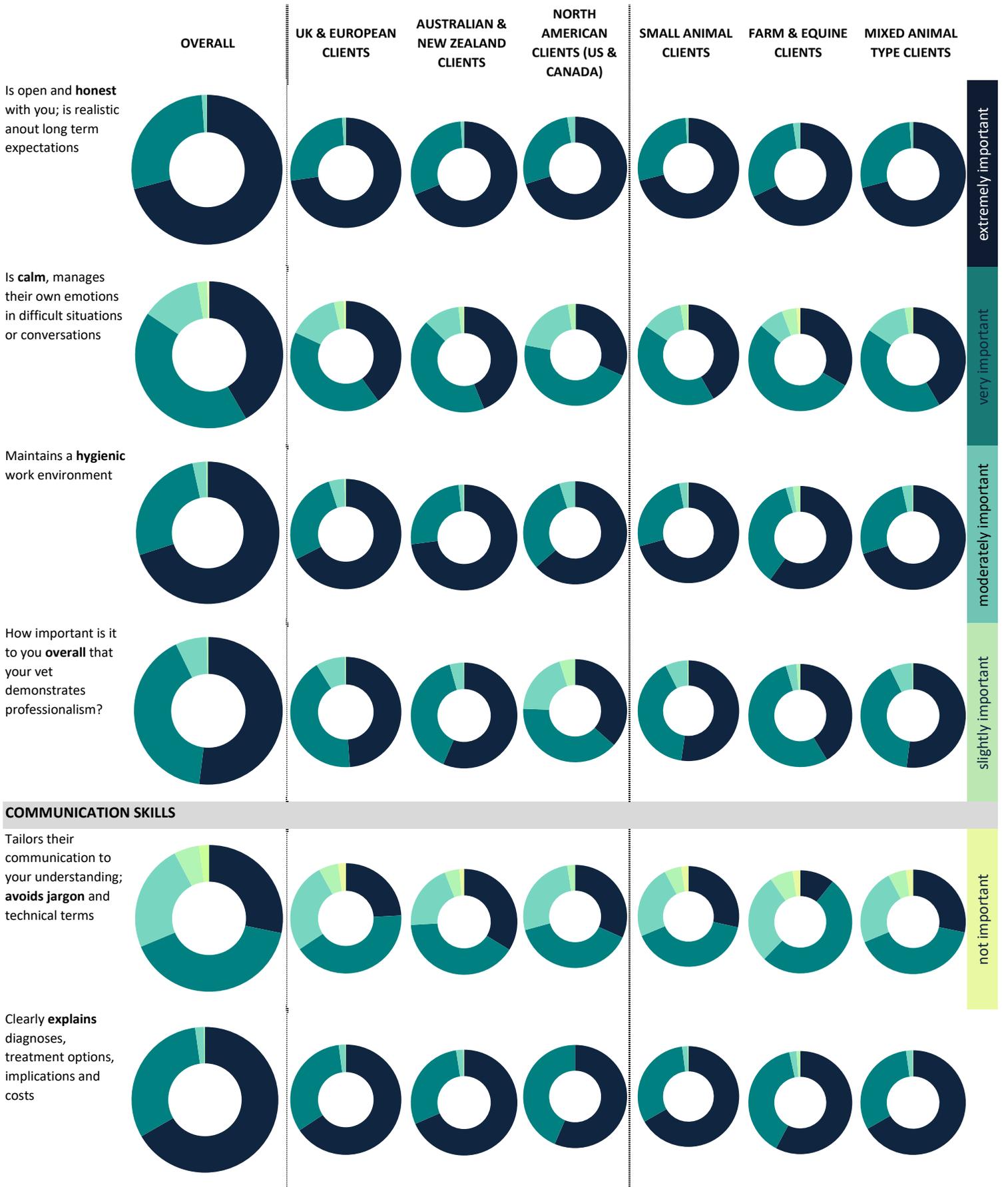
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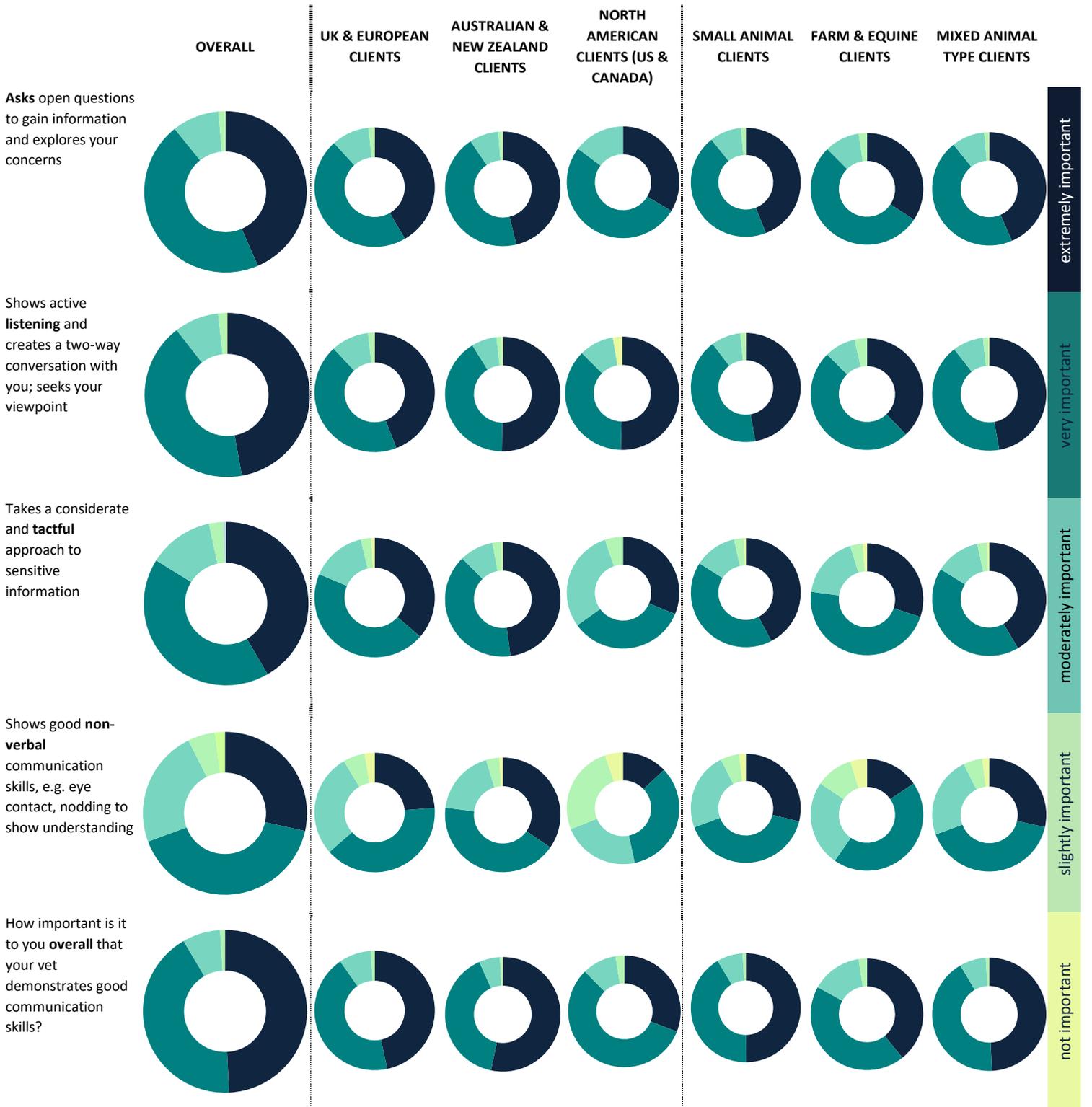
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